

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1 1. A method for providing user interfaces for a plurality of services
2 offered by an information distribution system, comprising:
3 providing a first application to support a first user interface for a first
4 service;
5 providing a second application to support a second user interface for a
6 second service; and
7 coordinating passing of control between the first and second applications
8 via a control mechanism.

1 2. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
2 maintaining first and second message queues for the first and second
3 applications, respectively.

1 3. The method of claim 2, further comprising:
2 passing control to the first and second applications via messages provided
3 to the first and second message queues, respectively.

1 4. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
2 polling the first or second application to determine a status of the
3 application.

1 5. The method of claim 2, further comprising:
2 polling for a status of the first or second application by providing a poll
3 message to the first or second message queue, respectively.

1 6. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
2 providing a root application to support communication between the first
3 and second applications and a lower layer.

1 7. The method of claim 6, wherein the communication between the root
2 application and the first and second applications is achieved via a set of application
3 programming interfaces (APIs).

1 25. A terminal configurable to provide user interfaces for a plurality of
2 services offered by an information distribution system, comprising:
3 a first application operable to support a first user interface for a first
4 service;
5 a second application operable to support a second user interface for a
6 second service; and
7 means for passing control between the first and second applications.

1 26. The terminal of claim 25, further comprising:
2 a root application operable to support communication between the first and
3 second applications and a hardware layer.

1 27. The terminal of claim 25, further comprising:
2 first and second message queues operable to store messages for the first
3 and second applications, respectively.

1 28. The terminal of claim 27, wherein the means for passing control is
2 implemented by providing messages to the first and second message queues, and wherein
3 the first and second applications are operable to retrieve and process messages stored in
4 the first and second message queues, respectively.

1 29. The terminal of claim 25, wherein the first application supports an
2 interactive program guide (IPG) and the second application supports video-on-demand
3 (VOD).

1 30. A terminal configurable to provide user interfaces for a plurality of
2 services offered by an information distribution system, comprising:
3 a first state indicative of a first application executing to support a first user
4 interface for a first service;
5 a second state indicative of a second application executing to support a
6 second user interface for a second service;
7 a third state indicative of the first and second applications being idle; and
8 means for transitioning between the first, second, and third states.

